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ABSTRACT

This issue of "The Future of Children" focuses on the daily care of infants and toddlers in the United States, highlighting information on caregiving arrangements, employer and government initiatives, promising strategies, and resources for use by journalists and policymakers. The guide begins with a summary of major findings related to infant and toddler care, including the percentage of infants and toddlers in nonparental care, child care costs, and the development of models for supporting employed parents. The remainder of the report is presented in four sections. Section 1 details parents' employment patterns and their need for child care, and infants' and toddlers' need for high-quality child care services. Section 2 presents information on employer supported child care services and other types of support as well as federal and state government initiatives for providing assistance for child care, tax policies that benefit children, and innovative funding strategies to support young children. Section 3 describes three promising strategies for supporting families with young children: (1) expanding family leave; (2) improving child care options; and (3) the military child care model. Section 4 provides information on resources for use by journalists and policymakers, including a list of experts on child care and early childhood development, organizations, and web sites. (Contains a 30-item annotated bibliography.) (KB)

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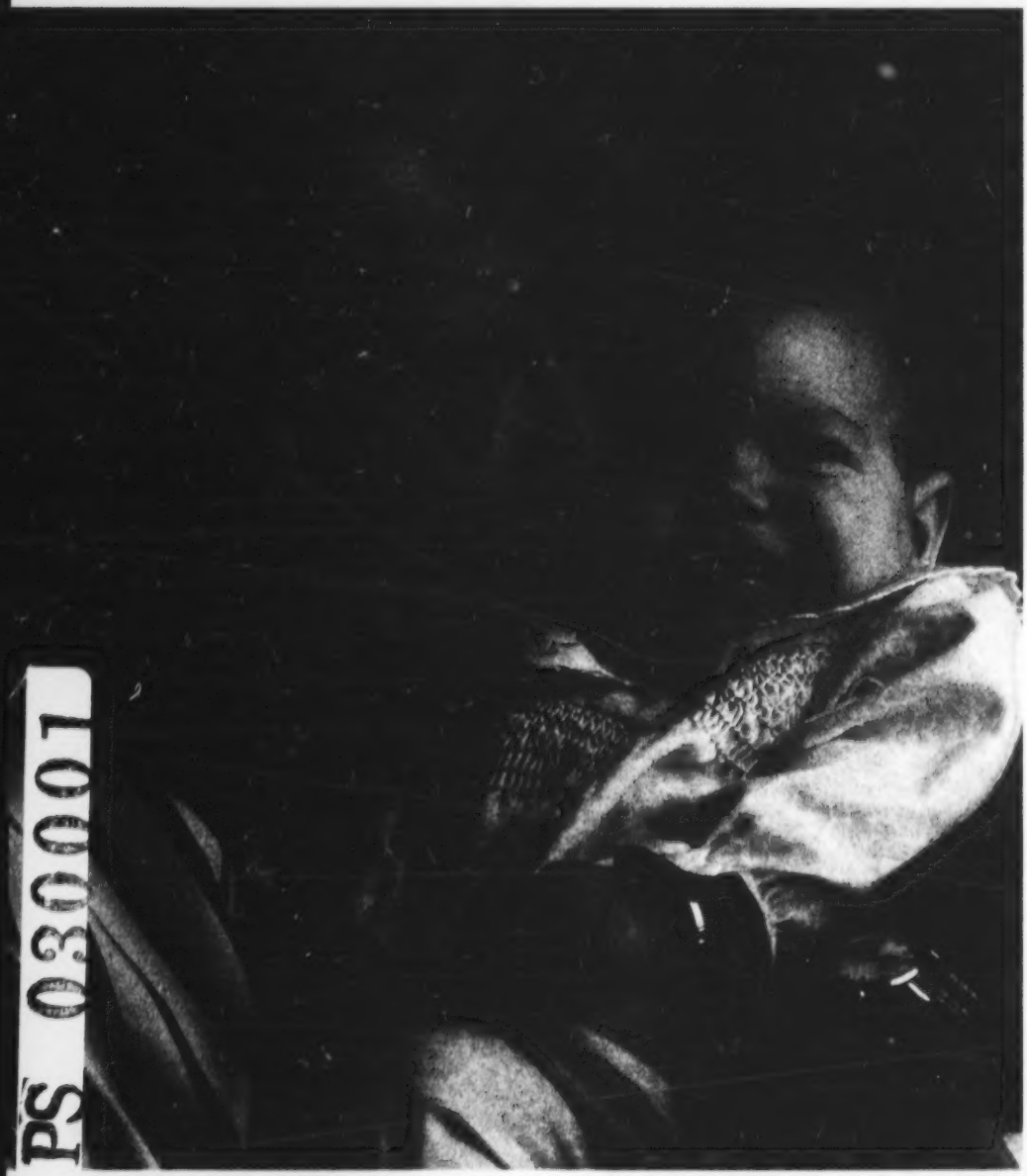
The Future of Children

Caring for Infants and Toddlers: Issues and Ideas

A Guide for Journalists and Policymakers • September 2001



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Fast Facts on Caring for Infants and Toddlers

The Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children*, a publication of The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, focuses on how families and society care for children under age three. Among the report's major findings:

FAST FACTS

The first three years matter to children.

- Young children grow faster physically, intellectually, and emotionally during their first three years than they ever will again.
- A three-year-old is already putting words together into simple sentences, mastering grammatical rules, and experiencing a "vocabulary explosion" that will result, by age six, in a lexicon of more than 10,000 words.

Increasingly, children spend part of these three years in the care of people who are not their parents.

- Of mothers with children under age three, 61% were employed in 2000, compared with just 34% in 1975.
- More than 11 million children in the United States are under age three, and this year nearly 5 million of them will spend about 25 hours per week in the care of someone other than a parent.
- Among infants and toddlers of working mothers, 27% are cared for by their parents—either by fathers or by mothers while they work. Another 27% are with relatives, 22% are in child care centers, 17% are in family child care homes, and 7% are with nannies or baby-sitters.
- The use of centers as a source of care for children under age three nearly tripled in 20 years, from 8% in 1977 to 22% in 1997.

For many families with young children, work is a matter of economic necessity.

- According to the National Center for Children in Poverty report, *Early Childhood Poverty: A Statistical Profile*, nearly 2.8 million children under age three lived in poverty in 1995.
- In 1999, nearly one-third of families receiving federal welfare benefits had children under age three: 12% had infants and 21% had children ages one or two.

Many parents struggle to balance their desire to be home with young children with the demands of work.

- The Family and Medical Leave Act guarantees the right to take 12 weeks of job-protected but unpaid leave to care for a newborn, a newly adopted child, or a seriously ill dependent. One-third of parents who take this leave use it to care for newborn children.
- The Family and Medical Leave Act applies only to companies with 50 or more employees and to individuals who have worked for that employer for at least 12 months and 1,250 hours within those 12 months. The leave is unpaid, which makes it difficult for low-income families to use.
- In contrast to the United States, which offers

fewer than three months of leave following childbirth and no wage replacement, Canada offers more than six months of childbirth-related leave, and all but two weeks of the leave are paid at the rate of 55% of prior earnings.

- A 1998 survey commissioned by an advocacy group, The National Partnership for Women and Families, found that most Americans—82% of women and 75% of men—support "extending state unemployment or disability insurance programs to cover unpaid family and medical leave."

For working parents, especially low-income parents, child care options are expensive and often of low quality.

- For a one-year-old, full-time child care in a center or licensed home costs an average of almost $6,000 per year.
- In 1998, child care subsidy funding amounted to $5.2 billion in state and federal dollars. These subsidies are available to families on or leaving welfare, as well as to some low-income families.
- Even though federal and state subsidies for child care have nearly tripled since 1992, subsidies reach only 15% of the 9.9 million children estimated to be eligible for assistance.
- Evidence is limited, but research suggests that high-quality child care—with well-trained, stable, nurturing caregivers and in stimulating settings—has positive effects on the development, school readiness, and overall well-being of children.
- In virtually all large-scale studies of child care in the United States, approximately 20% of the settings that participate in research have been found to fall below minimal thresholds of adequate care.

Promising models are emerging to support parents as they raise young children.

- In 2000, 31 states reported funding at least one early childhood development or family support program for children under age three.
- Five states and Puerto Rico provide paid maternity leave through state disability insurance programs, and 19 states are considering proposals to provide some form of paid family or medical leave.
- Since 1999, the California Children and Families First Act, enacted by voters in a ballot initiative, has dedicated nearly $700 million per year to services for children, prenatal to age five, through increased state excise taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco products.
- The U.S. military has created a comprehensive child care system that extends safe, high-quality care each day to more than 170,000 children, half of whom are under age three.

What Parents Need: Work and Caregiving Options

With an increasing number of mothers in the workforce, more and more parents in the United States are struggling to balance the needs of their young children with the demands of a job. The employment patterns of new parents and the choices that they make regarding child care are reviewed here.

What Are Current Employment Patterns of New Parents?

Most young children now have mothers who work. Two trends are driving the change: More married mothers are working to increase the family's income, and more children now live with single mothers who must work to support them.

Welfare reform, with its strict work requirements, also is spurring parents into the workforce. Under federal law, all mothers on welfare should be working by their child's first birthday. In some states, mothers must return to work when their children are three months old.

The Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* reports that of mothers with children under age three, 61% were employed in 2000, compared with just 34% in 1975.

Even mothers with infants under age one are working, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics report, *Employment Characteristics of Families*. In 2000, 54% of married mothers with babies worked, as did 59% of single mothers with babies.

In today's service-based economy, many businesses operate during early mornings, evenings, nights, and weekends, increasing the number of workers assigned to odd-hour shifts. The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics report, *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, predicts substantial job growth by 2005 in home health, security, transportation, food services, and sales jobs. Many of these jobs will require nontraditional hours.

Even with so many mothers working, many children live in poor families. According to the National Center for Children in Poverty report, *Early Childhood Poverty: A Statistical Profile*, nearly 2.8 million American children under age three lived in poverty in 1995.

What Caregiving Options Are Available to Parents?

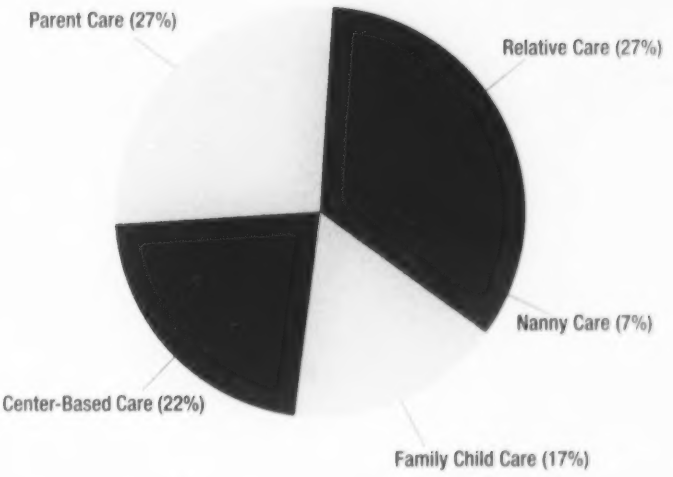
A 2001 report by Sylvester, *Listening to Families*, cites numerous public opinion polls in which Americans rate care by a child's own mother as the single most desirable type of care for children. Yet that is not the option that the majority of U.S. families choose—or can afford to choose.

An increasing number of children, regardless of age, spend time under the care of adults who are not their parents. By the mid-1990s, more than 6 million infants and toddlers were in some form of regular, nonparental child care for at least 10 hours per week, according to the Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children*.

For many children, regular nonparental care begins during the first year of life. In the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's multisite Study of Early Child Care, 72% of infants experienced regular, non-

Primary Child Care Arrangements for Children Under Age Three with Employed Mothers

Percentage of Children in Each Child Care Arrangement



Source: Ehrle, J., Adams, G., and Tout, T. *Who's caring for our youngest children: Child care patterns of infants and toddlers.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 2001, figure 1, p. 4.

parental child care. Most began care by three months of age and averaged 28 hours of child care per week.

The most current data about the care of children under age three comes from the 2001 report, *Who's Caring for Our Youngest Children? Child Care Patterns of Infants and Toddlers*, by Ehrle and colleagues of the Urban Institute. That report showed the following about children whose primary caretakers work:

- *27% are cared for by parents.* The mother herself or the other parent cares for the child of a working mother, either in or outside the home. The use of parental care does not differ by racial or ethnic background or by income. Two-parent families are almost three times as likely to rely on parental care as single-parent families are, however.
- *27% are cared for by relatives.* A relative who is not the child's parent provides care in either the child's or the relative's home. Care by relatives is most common among low-income families and among families with single parents. Among groups, use of relative care for infants and toddlers breaks down this way: 39% of Hispanic children are in relative care, compared to 27% of black children and 25% of white children.
- *22% are cared for in child care centers.* A nonresidential facility provides care, usually for 13 or more children, primarily serving parents who work full time during traditional hours. Most of these facilities are regulated or licensed in some way. Child care centers are more commonly used for black children (30%) and white children (24%), than for Hispanic children (10%) with working mothers. Children from higher-income families use the centers more commonly than children from low-income families.
- *17% are cared for in family child care settings.* A neighbor, a friend, or someone who has secured a license and considers this work a business or a career provides care in a private residence other than the child's home.
- *7% are cared for by nannies or baby-sitters.* Someone other than a parent or relative provides care in the child's home.
- About one-third of children under age three in nonparental care experience more than one child care arrangement.

How Much Time Do Infants and Toddlers Spend in Child Care?

Ehrle and colleagues' Urban Institute report also documents how much time children under age three, whose mothers work, typically spend in nonparental child care.

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- As children move from infancy into their twos, they are more likely to experience full-time child care (more than 35 hours per week).
- Infants and toddlers of working mothers spend more time in nonparental care as family income increases. In lower-income families, children spend an average of 21 hours per week in care, compared to 26 hours per week for children in higher-income families.
- Young children of single parents spend about 50% more time in nonparental care than young children from two-parent families—34 hours for those of single parents versus 23 hours for those from two-parent families.

How Much Does Child Care Cost?

According to a 2000 U.S. Bureau of the Census report by Smith, 64% of families with employed mothers paid for child care for their preschool-age children in 1995.

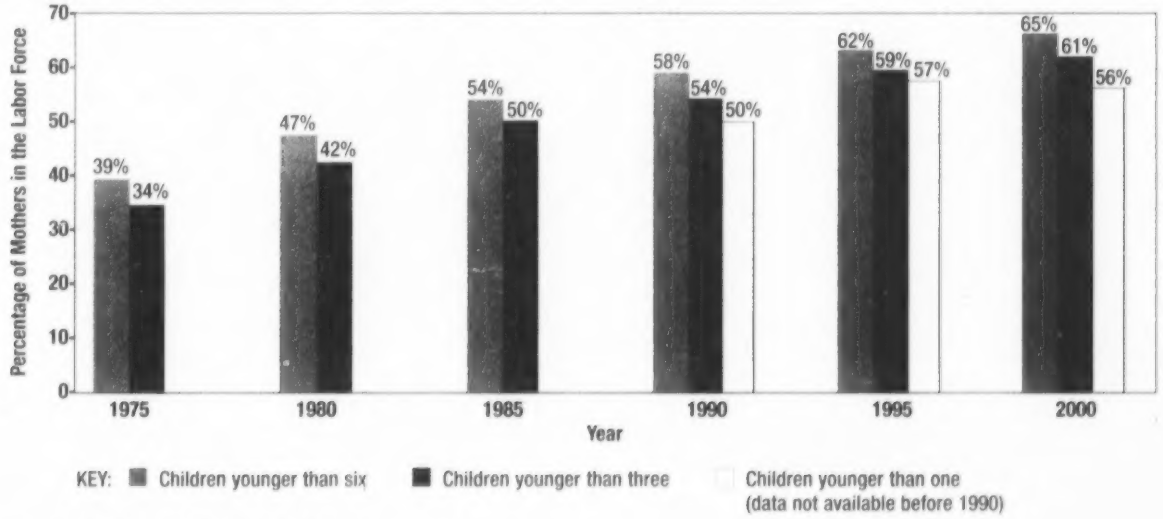
The Census Bureau report also found that although poor families spent fewer dollars on child care, they spent a greater portion of their family incomes. Poor families spent an average of $60 per week, representing 36% of their income. Families with higher incomes spent $85 per week, representing about 10% of their income.

In a 2000 report, Schulman of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) estimates that full-time care in a licensed center or family child care home is likely to cost about $6,000 per year for a one-year-old child. The CDF report explains that a low-income family with two parents working full time at the federal minimum wage earns $21,400 per year before taxes. Even if that family manages to devote 10% of its income to child care, it will have only $2,140 per year available.

How Many Families Receive Help Through Government Subsidies?

The U.S. Child Care Bureau reported in 2000 that only 1.5 million of the 9.9 million low- and moderate-income children eligible for federal Child Care Development Fund assistance (15% of those eligible) received help in an average month in 1998 through the program. Child development programs for low-income children—such as Head Start, Early Head Start, and Even Start—do not serve all eligible children either.

Trends in Employment for Mothers with Infants and Toddlers



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished tabulations.

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What Infants and Toddlers Need: High-Quality Child Care

Wherever they spend their waking hours, all children need competent, nurturing caregivers. Many are not getting this type of care, however. Major issues concerning child care quality—what quality is, why it matters, and what its status is in the United States today—are reviewed here.

What Makes Quality Child Care?

For child care to be high quality—whether at home, at a neighbor's house, or in a professional child care setting—it must be in a physical environment that is safe and supportive, must provide the child with adequate nutrition, and must protect the child's health.

Quality child care must also offer the opportunity for children to forge stable, consistent relationships with caregivers who are warm, sensitive, and responsive to their needs. In professional child care settings, this means low staff turnover.

Toddlers, especially, need stimulating activities, interesting surroundings, and chances to explore, solve problems, and exercise their growing skills.

In poor-quality child care settings, caregivers more often ignore rather than respond to infants' and toddlers' bids for attention. Age-appropriate or educational toys are in scarce supply, and children spend much of their time alone in their cribs or wandering aimlessly—not engaged with adults, other children, or materials.

Why Does Quality Care Matter?

Studies in the United States provide relatively little evidence regarding the long-term effects of child care on children. Evidence reviewed in the Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* indicates that high-quality child care centers and family day care homes have positive short-term effects on the well-being of children, however.

The Future of Children report explains that family day care homes or child care centers that feature small group sizes, high caregiver–child ratios, and qualified staff are linked to children's healthy intellectual development. Conversely, extensive exposure to poor-quality care can undermine relationships between children and their caregivers at home.

According to *The Future of Children*, different dimensions of child care settings are important for children of varying ages. Infants appear to fare best under one-on-one care, but toddlers receive more stimulation when they are cared for in small groups.

What Is the Status of Child Care Quality in the United States?

Shonkoff and Phillips of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report that child care for infants and toddlers in the United States varies greatly in quality. In a 2000 report, *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, they point out that some child care settings provide rich experiences that promote growth for young children, but too many do not offer children appropriate stimulation or stable relationships with caregivers—and some are downright unsafe.

For instance, the Spring/Summer 2001 issue of

The Future of Children cites a 1998 Consumer Product Safety Commission study of 220 licensed child care settings, which found that two-thirds had at least one safety hazard, such as cribs with soft bedding, lack of safety gates on stairs, and unsafe playground surfacing.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) is sponsoring an ongoing multisite research effort, called the Study of Early Child Care, that is producing important evidence regarding the quality of child care and its effects on the development of children.

- Based on observations at 600 nonmaternal care settings in nine states (with friends and relatives, at family child care homes, or in centers), NICHD researchers have estimated that 8% of settings nationwide for children under age three are poor, 53% are fair, 30% are good, and only 9% are excellent.
- According to the NICHD study, three-quarters of infant caregivers are "minimally or not at all stimulating of cognitive and language development." One caregiver in five observed interacted with the children in what observers rated as a moderately or highly detached way.

What Barriers Exist to Providing Quality Care?

Several factors undermine the quality of child care for infants and toddlers. These include a shortage of well-trained child care workers; lack of consistent standards, licensing, and regulation; and lack of family resources to pay for better care.

A Shortage of Well-Trained Child Care Workers

The *2000 Green Book* published by the U.S. House of Representatives reports that the 1997 median hourly wage of a center-based "child care worker" was $7.03, and the wage for a "preschool teacher" was $9.09. Hourly wages for family child care providers were estimated at a median of $4.69 per hour.

Many child care workers leave the field for better-paying jobs. According to the Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children*, the turnover rate for child care providers is about 30% per year, compromising the needs of children for stable, consistent relationships with caregivers.

According to Vandell and Wolfe's report published by the University of Wisconsin Institute for Research on Poverty, education levels of child care workers have declined in the last decade. Lack of proper training in care for infants and toddlers can compromise the ability of caregivers to deliver high-quality care.

Lack of Consistent Standards, Licensing, and Regulation

According to Blank and colleagues of the Children's Defense Fund, as of June 2000,

- Only 10 states required all home-based caregivers to meet regulations.
- Thirty-one states did not require child care center teachers to be trained in child development.
- Thirty states did not require family child care providers to have such training.
- Child care regulations in only 10 states met the standards set by professional organizations for child–staff ratios.

Lack of Family Resources to Pay for Better Care

Whereas the lack of available high-quality care presents difficulties for many families, the Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* found that the burden of poor quality and limited choice falls most heavily on low-income, working families whose financial resources are too high to allow them to qualify for subsidies, yet too low to afford quality care.

In addition, the report found that lower-income families often live in neighborhoods where good-quality care is scarce and often have jobs with odd hours or irregular schedules—which means that they must work at times when child care is not readily available.

What Employers Are Doing

With mothers constituting a significant and growing portion of the workforce, and with many working fathers expressing a desire to spend more time with their families, a small but growing number of employers are offering programs and benefits to help employees—especially parents of young children—balance work and family responsibilities.

In most cases, these initiatives are not government mandated but have been developed by employers to attract and keep employees, enhance worker productivity, and improve the company's image. Indeed, as the Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* reports, evaluations conducted by pioneering companies indicate that family-friendly policies have positive effects on recruitment, retention, absenteeism, and company loyalty.

What Types of Family Support Do Employers Provide?

Employers can offer a broad array of supports for families with young children—some costly, some inexpensive. According to a 1999 U.S. Department of Labor report called *Futurework*, the most common family-friendly programs that employers adopt include the following:

- *The Dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP)* is a federal program under which employers make pretax contributions to accounts that fund employees' dependent care expenses or allow employees to withhold a portion of their salaries for these expenses. This plan is sometimes called a *flexible spending account* or a *salary reduction plan*. Employers and employees pay no taxes on these funds, up to $5,000 in any one year.
- *Parental leave plans* allow employees to take time off from work to care for newborn, newly adopted, or severely ill children. The federal Family and Medical Leave Act requires employers with 50 or more employees to provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave to employees who have worked at least 12 months and 1,250 hours in the past year. Only a small percentage of parental leave is paid, however.
- *Flexible work hours and arrangements* allow employees some flexibility in determining their own schedules. Plans range from those that allow employees a window each day for arrivals and departures—"traditional flextime"—to those that allow employees to work compressed workweeks or to combine sick and annual leave as they choose.

How Many Businesses Offer Family-Friendly Options?

In a 1998 survey of businesses with more than 100 employees conducted by the Families and Work Institute, Galinsky and colleagues reported on the proportion of businesses offering family-friendly options. Of the businesses surveyed,

- One-half or more said they offered the following benefits:
  - Dependent Care Assistance Plans
  - Traditional flextime and (less often) compressed workweeks
- One-third to one-half allowed these options:
  - More than 12 weeks of maternity leave
  - Job sharing
  - Telecommuting

- Fewer than 10% offered the following benefits:
  - Subsidies for child care costs, including vouchers or reimbursements
  - On-site or off-site child care centers supported by the employer
- Other benefits sometimes offered by larger businesses include sick-child care programs for mildly ill children, emergency child care programs for parents whose regular child care arrangements have fallen through, resource and referral services, and parent education.

How Are Larger Companies Doing More?

Large companies are innovators when it comes to family-friendly workplace policies. The Families and Work Institute survey by Galinsky and colleagues suggests that the larger the company, the more likely it is to provide flexible work options, longer parental leave, and paid maternity leave. Companies with 1,000 or more employees are twice as likely as other employers to sponsor child care centers near or on a work site, for example.

Why? One factor may be that larger companies can develop economies of scale as they implement family-friendly policies, dedicate staff members to focus on work/life issues, and train managers to respond to employees' work/life concerns.

The benefits offered at some large companies are not available to most Americans, however. According to researchers

Employer Work/Life Programs Vary by Company Size

Percentage of Companies Offering the Program

Employer Program	All Companies with 100+ Employees	100 to 250 Employees	250 to 999 Employees	1,000+ Employees	Significance of Difference in Company Size
On-site Services					
Child care center	9%	7%	5%	18%	***
Backup child care	4%	3%	3%	8%	*
Sick child care	5%	4%	5%	9%	
Financial Assistance					
Family health insurance	95%	92%	96%	99%	
DCAP plan, pretax dollars for child care	50%	34%	54%	71%	***
Vouchers or direct child care subsidies	5%	3%	6%	9%	**
Information & Counseling					
Employee assistance program	56%	40%	58%	79%	***
Child care resource and referral	36%	24%	39%	50%	***
Work/life seminars	25%	17%	22%	40%	***
Broad Child Care Supports					
Community contributions	9%	6%	9%	13%	*
Public/private projects	11%	16%	7%	9%	

Sample sizes vary due to missing data on specific variables.
* A difference this size would occur by chance only 5 in 100 times.
** A difference this size would occur by chance only 1 in 100 times.
*** A difference this size would occur by chance only 1 in 1,000 times.

Source: Galinsky, E. and Bond, J.T., Supporting families as primary caregivers: The role of the workplace. In *Infants and toddlers in out-of-home care*. D. Cryer and T. Harms, eds. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brookes Publishing, 2000, pp. 309–50.

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at the U.S. Bureau of the Census, nearly 40 million Americans work in businesses with fewer than 100 employees.

As the U.S. Department of the Treasury reports in *Investing in Child Care*, unions also play a key role in creating family-friendly workplaces. Galinsky and colleagues of the Families and Work Institute found that companies with larger proportions of unionized workers were more likely to provide work/life benefits.

Is Access to Supports Equal?

Despite the progress that employers have made in developing family-friendly policies, they can do more—especially for low-income families.

Overall, employers are most likely to offer benefits that cost them little, such as DCAP accounts, flexible work arrangements, and educational services. Costly programs and policies, such as child care assistance, are much less common.

Moreover, when employees themselves (rather than businesses) are surveyed, sharp inequities in access to family-friendly supports show up. The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce by Bond and colleagues of the Families and Work Institute provides pertinent statistics, also reported in the Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children:*

- Higher-wage and full-time workers are most likely to receive family benefits, such as child care assistance. In 1997, 14% of professional and technical workers received child care assistance, compared to only 10% of clerical and sales workers and 7% of service workers.
- Whereas higher-income parents can often take time off for their sick children without losing pay, lower-income families have much less access to this benefit. Only 36% of parents with lower family incomes—and similar proportions of single parents and part-time workers—can take time off to care for sick children without losing pay.
- Employees earning less than $7.70 per hour are significantly less likely than those earning more than $19.25 per hour to receive even traditional benefits such as family health insurance, paid vacation days, paid holidays, and flextime.
- Even when employers do offer work/life benefits, such as flexible work schedules, *The Future of Children* points out that relatively few employees take advantage of them. In part, use rates may be low because only one company in four gives its managers ongoing training on helping employees cope with work/life issues. In addition, many employees are reluctant to take advantage of such benefits for fear of being perceived as less valuable to their employers.

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What Federal and State Governments Are Doing

Federal and state governments are important partners in helping families care for young children. In addition to providing economic relief for parents through the tax code and mandated unpaid leave for new parents, the federal government sponsors nearly a dozen major programs to promote child care and healthy child development in low-income and at-risk families. Fisher and colleagues of The Finance Project, a nonpartisan policy analysis organization, estimate that total federal investment in young children was well over $35 billion in 2000.

State governments play two important roles with respect to programs to support young children and their families: (1) they administer the federal funds passed to them through block grants, and (2) they generate and invest funds of their own to benefit children.

What Kinds of Universal Federal Assistance Exist for Families with Children?

- *The per-child tax credit*, available to families with children under age 17, offers families a credit of up to $500 per child. The tax credit will increase to $1,000 per child over the next decade. The credit is phased out for tax filers with higher incomes. Beginning in 2002, the tax credit will be available as a cash refund to low-income families who have not previously qualified when they have not owed federal income tax.

- *The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (DCTC)* is available to all families with children under age 13. Depending on their income and child care expenses, families may receive tax credits of up to $720 for one child or $1,440 for two or more children. Because the credit is not refundable, families cannot claim it if they do not have tax liabilities. Starting in 2003, changes to the formulas used to calculate the credit will enable families to claim a higher amount.

- *The Family and Medical Leave Act* requires employers with 50 or more employees to allow 12 weeks of unpaid leave (and no loss of job status) to qualifying employees to care for a newborn, a newly adopted child, or a severely ill dependent. This policy is a mandate on employers and does not cost the government.

What Federal Programs Exist for Vulnerable Young Children?

Much federal funding assistance for young children and their families is targeted for specific groups, such as low-income families or children with disabilities. In some cases, the federal government allocates funds (such as the Child Care Development Fund) to states in the form of block grants, which means that states decide, with few federal restrictions, how to spend the funds. In other cases, the federal government maintains more control over funds, such as those of the Head Start program.

The Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* reports that major federal investments in child care and early childhood development come through the following programs:

- *The Child Care Development Fund (CCDF),*

Federal Expenditures on Families with Young Children

Program	Purpose	2001 Funding	President Bush's 2002 Budget Request
Per-child Tax Credit	Provide a $500 tax credit to families with children under age 17	$20.1 billion (estimated)	$19.7 billion (estimated)
Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit	Provide a tax credit for child care expenses (up to $2,400 for one child, $4,800 for two children) for families with children under age 13	$2.4 billion (estimated)	$2.3 billion (estimated)
Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)	Offer child care subsidies for low-income families	$2 billion	$2.2 billion (with $400 million set aside for an after-school voucher program)
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families	Subsidize child care for families receiving or leaving welfare	$16.7 billion; states may transfer up to 30% of this amount to child care.	$16.7 billion; states may transfer up to 30% of this amount to child care.
Early Head Start	Develop social competence, learning, health, and nutrition in low-income children under age 3	Approximately $465 million (7.5% of total appropriation for Head Start)	Approximately $630 million (10% of total appropriation for Head Start)
Even Start	Provide family literacy programs and early childhood education to low-income, limited-English proficiency families with children under age 7	$250 million	$250 million
Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities	Promote development and remediate problems among infants and toddlers with disabilities	$384 million	$384 million

which in 1996 replaced the Child Care and Development Block Grant, provides funds to enable states to subsidize child care for low-income families. Because CCDF is a block grant, states have discretion as to how they spend the funds, but most offer vouchers or reimbursements that parents can use for different types of child care, including informal providers such as friends or relatives. States determine how child care will be licensed or regulated. States are required to set aside at least 4% of their block grants to improve child care quality.

- In 1998, according to the *2000 Green Book* of the U.S. House of Representatives, CCDF served approximately 1.5 million children, 28% of whom were under age three. Of the children served by CCDF, 11% received care in their homes, 30% in family child care homes, and 55% in centers. Nearly three-quarters of these settings were regulated.

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- *Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)* is a block grant that provides cash assistance (commonly called welfare) to poor families. This block grant provides a revenue source that states can use to supplement their child care subsidy budgets. Groginsky and colleague of The National Conference of State Legislatures report that states used 11%—or $1.76 billion—of their 1999 TANF funds to increase the availability of child care subsidies.

- *Early Head Start* dedicates a small percentage of Head Start—the 30-year-old federal education program for low-income or disabled children ages three to five—for low-income pregnant women and children under age three. Early Head Start grantees use funds to provide high-quality early education, home visits, parent education, health services, and peer support to eligible families and children.

- *Even Start* is a family literacy program for low-income families with children under age seven and with parents with limited English proficiency. The program offers adult literacy and basic education, parenting education, and early childhood education.

- *The Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities* is available to all families whose young children have developmental delays or disabilities. The program seeks to ensure that children receive assessments and referrals to appropriate therapists and that parents and caregivers receive help addressing problems that children face.

How Do State Investments Help Young Children?

Much of the federal government's $35 billion expenditure on behalf of children is passed along to states in the form of block grants. States make most of the decisions about how to spend federal block grant funds—and which families to serve. As noted previously, major block grants include funds for welfare and for child care subsidies.

In addition to the federal funds they receive, most states allocate resources of their own—in the form of general fund revenues, state tax credits, or other financing arrangements—to increase the supports available to young children.

- Fisher and colleagues of The Finance Project estimate that states spent about $535 million more on subsidized child care in Fiscal Year 1999 than they were required to spend in order to meet federal matching requirements for these funds.

- States are creating programs to help families access and pay for child care. They are seeking to improve the quality of child care by increasing payments to subsidized providers and by supporting teacher training and compensation initiatives.

- In 2000, according to Cauthen and colleagues of the National Center for Children in Poverty, 31 states reported funding at least one early childhood development or family support program for children under age three. Total state spending on child development and family support for children under age six rose by 90% from 1998 to 2000 and now tops $3.7 billion annually.

State Tax Policies That Benefit Children

State dependent care tax credits are offered on income tax by 22 states and the District of Columbia for child care expenses; four states offer deductions for child care expenses. One state, Maryland, offers both. Nearly all of these states link their child care tax provisions to some or all of the provisions of the federal DCTC. Eight of these states have refundable child care tax credits, enabling even taxpayers who owe no taxes to claim the credit. Maximum benefits under state DCTCs range from a low of $25 in Louisiana to a high of $1,584 in New York.

Employer tax credits are provided by 25 states in the form of some type of tax assistance to employers who provide or pay for child care for their employees. Evidence indicates, however, that few employers use these credits.

Innovative State Funding Strategies

Many states have developed innovative strategies to raise money for children. Some of these funds are targeted to needy families; others offer supports for all families. A 2001 report by Mitchell and colleagues of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, *Financing Child Care in the United States*, highlights some of these strategies:

- *Tobacco taxes and settlement funds.* Some states have dedicated revenues from tobacco taxes or tobacco-related litigation to child care and early childhood development programs. The largest of these funds is in California, which dedicates $700 million per year in tobacco taxes to its comprehensive early childhood development initiative.

- *Lottery proceeds.* Thirteen states earmark lottery proceeds for education, including prekindergarten. One state, Missouri, dedicates funds specifically to early childhood development, education, and care. That state spends proceeds on competitive grants to child care providers, certificates for low-income families to purchase care, increased subsidies to licensed child care centers and family day care homes, and certificates for low-income families with stay-at-home parents to purchase early childhood education services.

- *Innovative fundraising.* A few states have experimented with fundraising strategies to support young children. In Colorado, for example, taxpayers can check a box on their income tax returns to have state funds directed to child care quality improvements. In Massachusetts, drivers can pay extra for an "Invest in Children" license plate, with some of the proceeds going toward child care quality. Generally, however, these strategies have produced little revenue.

States Funding Child Development and Family Support Programs for Infants and Toddlers in FY 2000

KEY: ■ States funding programs that specifically target infants and toddlers (31 states)
States not funding programs that specifically target infants and toddlers (20 states)
● States that did not report programs for infants and toddlers in *Map and Track 1998*, but have since added such programs (7 states)

Source: Cauthen, N.K., Knitzer, J., and Ripple, C. *Map and track: State initiatives for young children and families.* New York: National Center for Children in Poverty, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, 2000. Reprinted with permission.

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Why Do Some Advocates Want to Expand Government Programs for Young Children?

Advocates for expanding the public role in children's policy argue that federal and state governments can do much more to support families with young children, particularly low-income families. Among their arguments for additional government intervention are the following:

- *Without government help, many families cannot afford to pay for high-quality child care.* The U.S. Child Care Bureau of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) reports that child care expenses in 1993 averaged between 18% and 25% of a poor family's income. Advocates argue that families who can't afford child care may be forced out of the workplace. According to recent research by the DHHS, families on waiting lists for child care assistance are more likely to cut back on their work hours, receive public assistance, go into debt, or even declare bankruptcy.

- *Existing programs for low-income families do not serve all eligible children.* Federal programs are not entitlements that any eligible family has a right to receive; many of these funds are capped. According to the U.S. Child Care Bureau, for example, only 15% of the low- and moderate-income children eligible for CCDF assistance received help through the program in an average month in 1998. Head Start, Early Head Start, and Even Start do not serve all eligible children either. Critics note, however, that some parents may choose not to enroll their children in these programs.

- *The United States does far less than other industrialized nations to support families with young children.* The Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* reports that most European nations offer paid parental leave to new parents—some for as long as three years. In addition, European nations are far more generous than the United States in the amount of money they spend to subsidize parents' child care costs.

- *Public support for expanding government programs for young children is broad.* According to a ZERO TO THREE October 2000 survey, *What Grown-Ups Understand About Child Development*, 73% of parents with young children and 65% of all adults support government financial assistance to help families pay for quality child care.

Why Do Some Advocates Oppose Expanding Federal Programs for Young Children?

Those who favor a limited approach to federal involvement in programs for young children offer these arguments:

- *By using tax dollars to subsidize child care, the federal government discourages parents from staying home with their children*, some conservatives argue. Similar federal subsidies or tax breaks are not available for stay-at-home parents.

- *The efficacy of government programs, such as Head Start, is questionable*, according to critics who view them as expensive and of limited value. A 1997 Cato Institute article by Olsen notes that numerous research studies of Head Start are inconclusive about the program's success.

- *In some polls, Americans make it clear that parents, not government, should bear the primary responsibility for raising children* (particularly when children are very young), some critics of increased government spending point out. The Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* notes that in a September 2000 poll by the *Washington Post*, the Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard University, 79% of voters in a nationally representative sample agreed that mothers may need to work for financial reasons but that it would be better if they could stay home to care for their homes and children.

Expanding Family Leave

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), enacted in 1993, requires employers with 50 or more employees to offer 12 weeks of unpaid leave for qualified employees to care for a newborn, a newly adopted child, or a sick dependent. The law has proven enormously popular; one 1998 survey by The National Partnership for Women and Families found that 88% of Americans who were familiar with it viewed it favorably. The law also has entailed little or no cost for the vast majority of employers. According to an Employment Policy Foundation study reported by Hattiangadi, more than 24 million Americans have taken advantage of the FMLA since 1993.

But FMLA is not available to all U.S. workers. Fewer than half of the nation's private-sector employees are covered. These workers are ineligible because they haven't worked for current employers for at least one year and at least 1,250 hours during the prior year or because they work for businesses with fewer than 50 employees. As the Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* reports, such exclusions disproportionately affect low-wage workers, part-time workers, and women leaving welfare for work.

Even many covered employees do not benefit from FMLA because they cannot afford to take unpaid time off. Nearly two-thirds of employees who need—but do not take—family or medical leave say they could not afford to use it. According to a report by Cantor and colleagues commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor, nearly 1 in 10 workers who took advantage of FMLA was forced onto public assistance while on leave. For FMLA users with family incomes below $20,000, that rate doubled to 1 in 5.

Unlike other industrialized nations, the United States does not offer paid parental leave. According to Kamerman in *Social Policy Report*, most industrialized nations provide longer leave (an average of 10 months) than the United States does. Policies in these countries provide some form of wage replacement or income supplement and tend to universally cover all parents. Canada guarantees workers more than six months of childbirth-related (maternity and parental) leave, with all but two weeks paid at 55% of earnings. The United Kingdom guarantees employees 18 weeks of leave with some pay and an additional 13 weeks of unpaid leave. Finland, France, Germany, and Norway all offer paid leave for the first three years of a child's life.

Americans broadly support some type of paid leave for new parents. In an October 2000 ZERO TO THREE survey, *What Grown-Ups Understand About Child Development*, 88% of parents with young children and 80% of all adults supported paid parental leave.

How Are States Expanding Unpaid Family Leave?

Although the U.S. Congress may not expand the federal FMLA in the near future, many states have taken steps to extend the availability of unpaid leave. The National Partnership for Women and Families, an advocacy group that seeks expanded family leave, reports that as of 2001,

- Three states have adopted comprehensive family and medical leave laws that apply to employers with fewer than 50 employees. The most generous of these laws, in Vermont, requires employers with more than 10 employees to grant

unpaid leave for care of a newborn or a newly adopted child and employers with more than 15 employees to grant sick leave.

- Twelve states have approved narrower leave laws that apply to employers with fewer than 50 employees. Most of these require smaller employers to offer only unpaid maternity leave.

- Eight states provide longer periods of unpaid job-protected family and medical leave—some of up to 16 weeks. Some of these laws apply only to maternity disability leave, however—that is, when pregnancy or childbirth produces a medical problem that makes it impossible for a woman to return immediately to work.

What Strategies Are States Using to Provide Paid Family Leave?

Given strong public support for paid parental leave policies, many states are exploring mechanisms for financing paid leave. Most seek to expand existing insurance systems that cover disabled or unemployed workers. At least one state is experimenting with another approach to supporting parents who choose to stay home with children: Under Minnesota's At-Home Infant Care Program, low-income working parents receive subsidies if one parent stays home to care for infants under age one.

Use of Temporary Disability Insurance

Although no federal system provides paid family leave to workers, five states have systems in place through their state-funded Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) programs. This insurance provides short-term, partial wage replacement to employees who are temporarily disabled for medical reasons, including pregnancy and childbirth. California, Hawaii, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island have TDI systems or require employers to offer TDI, as does Puerto Rico. These policies cover 22% of the nation's private workforce, according to the National Partnership for Women and Families.

Use of Unemployment Insurance

In June 2000, the U.S. Department of Labor gave states the option of using their unemployment insurance systems to provide paid parental leave. The new federal regulation permits states to grant new parents up to 12 weeks of partial wage replacement benefits in the year following the birth or adoption of a child.

No state currently provides paid parental leave through its unemployment insurance system. In 2001, however, the National Partnership for Women and Families reported that state legislators introduced bills in 13 states that would use unemployment insurance to fund leave for new parents. In seven other states, legislators have proposed reliance on sources such as TDI, general fund revenues, and tax credits for employers.

The idea of funding parental leave through the unemployment insurance system has broad public support: a 2000 ZERO TO THREE poll found that 89% of parents of young children and 84% of all adults support expanding disability or unemployment insurance to provide paid family leave.

Proponents of the unemployment insurance approach point out that its costs are low—estimates run from less than 15 cents to about $1.25 per week, per covered employee, depending on the state. The National Partnership for Women and Families, one of the idea's major proponents, notes that state reserves in unemployment insurance trust funds increased 95% from the end of the last recession in 1992 through 1999.

Critics, including many business groups that opposed passage of the FMLA, worry that using the unemployment insurance system to provide family leave would overwhelm the system during recessions and result in higher taxes for businesses. The National Federation for Independent Business predicts that this approach would jeopardize the safety net in hard economic times and lead to payroll tax increases on small businesses. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other business groups have sued to block the Department of Labor regulation.

Improving Child Care Options

New energy has gone into efforts to improve the quality and accessibility of child care, especially for low-income families, since the federal government earmarked 4% of the funds in the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) for "quality" expenditures in 1996.

In a Center for Law and Social Policy report, Greenberg and colleagues note that states are encouraged to use these funds to create, expand, or improve resource and referral programs; to help child care providers meet licensing standards; to improve the monitoring of child care standards; to provide training and technical assistance to child care providers; and to improve salaries and other compensation for child care workers.

Many states are going beyond the federal requirement, finding creative ways to use federal funds, state revenues, and public-private partnerships to support quality initiatives.

In addition, a growing number of states and communities are investing in broad-based initiatives that encompass all of the developmental needs of young children—from their need for quality child care to their needs for health care, adequate nutrition, and intellectual stimulation. In some cases, states and communities are targeting these comprehensive services to low-income or at-risk children. Other efforts are universal, with support offered to all families.

How Are State Initiatives Improving Quality?

In a 2001 report of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), Blank and colleagues describe the strategies states have adopted in their efforts to improve quality and accessibility of child care. These include policy attention to licensing systems, initiatives to improve the training and compensation of professional staff, supports for relatives who provide child care, and expanded access to child care.

Strengthened Licensing Systems

The U.S. House of Representatives' *2000 Green Book* points out that no uniform state strategy exists to regulate all forms of child care but that all states require regulation of center-based care licensing or registration. As the CDF report points out, several states are strengthening their licensing requirements and practices to protect consumers and recognize quality. For example,

- *Tennessee* passed new licensing requirements that improved the staff-child ratio for infants from 1:5 to 1:4 and for toddlers from 1:8 to 1:7. That state also requires fingerprinting of early childhood education staff members and has increased postemployment training requirements for directors and teachers.
- *North Carolina* helps parents make choices about child care facilities by assigning facilities "star ratings" based on quality. To monitor its star-rated licensing program, North Carolina has added 60 licensing consultants and supervisors.
- *Kentucky's* Kids Now! Initiative created a tiered rating system for child care centers and family child care homes. Providers that already receive public funds and that meet the higher standards receive higher payments from the state. Some child care providers that meet the higher-quality standards also receive one-time cash awards.

Improvements in Training and Compensation for Child Care Professionals

In its report, the CDF also highlights a number of new initiatives to bolster the skills of and improve compensation for the child care workforce.

- In 1998, *North Carolina* enacted WAGE$, an initiative that provides a modest amount of funds to supplement wages of caregivers who hold a credential in early childhood education. In 2000, *California*, *Illinois*, and *New York* followed North Carolina's lead by enacting similar initiatives.

- *Rhode Island's* Starting RIte program provides health care coverage to licensed family child care providers and their children. Rhode Island's insurance program covers workers at centers where at least 40% of the children are from low-income families receiving state child care subsidies.

Improved Support for Relatives Who Provide Care

In an issue brief published by the National Center for Children in Poverty, Collins and Carlson identify strategies that states and community organizations are using to reach out and offer supports to the caregivers they call "kith and kin." For example,

- In Suffolk County, *New York*, relatives who care for children receiving subsidies are allowed to participate in a federal program that provides reimbursements for meals served to children, along with nutrition education and regular monitoring visits.

- *Georgia* has invested in a program to help in-home child care providers, many of whom are children's relatives, improve their facilities and the quality of their programs.

Expanded Access to Care

In addition to noting state efforts to improve the quality of child care, the CDF report also highlights some of the ways in which states are working to make child care more accessible to low-income families. Examples in the report include the following:

- In 2000, nine states changed their income eligibility guidelines for child care assistance to allow families to continue receiving subsidies as their earnings rise.

- In 2000, 16 states raised the rates paid to subsidized child care providers.

What Are Comprehensive Early Childhood Development Initiatives?

Some states have launched new initiatives to improve outcomes for children across a broad range of indicators: from child health to intellectual development to abuse and neglect. With ambitious aims, comprehensive initiatives typically pull in a broad range of partners and offer a broad range of services. These often include preventive health care and immunizations, child care quality improvements, family literacy services, parenting education, home visitation, and public awareness campaigns.

Local planning commissions with broad discretion over funding and program eligibility decisions typically lead initiatives. This approach allows communities to decide which services to offer and to whom. Participating parents then choose what they need. Although governments provide the major share of support for comprehensive early childhood initiatives, foundations and public-private partnerships also contribute.

The Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* describes several examples of comprehensive state initiatives.

- In *California* in 1998, voters approved Proposition 10, a "Children and Families First" initiative that raised taxes on tobacco products and allocated 100% of these tax revenues —nearly $700 million per year—to foster opportunities for physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development for California's youngest children before they begin school. Under Proposition 10, 80% of the tax revenues go directly to county commissions, which determine how best to foster these opportunities in their communities.

- The *North Carolina* Smart Start initiative has aimed since 1993 to promote positive child development for all children in the state under age six. North Carolina awards funds to counties for early childhood development projects on a competitive basis. Funds pay for child care, immunizations, children's health, family support services, parenting education, literacy programs, and vouchers for stay-at-home parents. Some counties have also used funds to reduce child care waiting lists, increase income eligibility levels, or increase payments to providers.

- In *West Virginia*, the governor's Cabinet on Children and Families has established Family Resource Networks: local hubs that plan and coordinate health, education, and social services. These Family Resource Networks have launched comprehensive family centers in 18 isolated communities. The centers offer health screening and care, parent and preschool education, employment counseling, and home-visiting outreach programs.

Military Child Care: A National Model

The armed forces have become a model for high-quality, affordable child care around the nation. Until the late 1980s, the military relied primarily upon the private sector to meet the child care needs of service members. But military families had trouble finding affordable, high-quality care that met their special needs. In 1989, the military began reforming its own child care system to provide the children of military personnel with options that are diverse, affordable, flexible, and consistently of high quality.

Today, as the Spring/Summer 2001 issue of *The Future of Children* reports, the system serves more than 170,000 children each day at more than 300 locations worldwide. Half of these children are under age three.

Among the distinctive features of the military child care system are the following:

- The military offers a seamless delivery system, including a variety of types of care available through a single point of entry. Military parents contact resource and referral offices on base that manage waiting lists for all types of care, including child development centers and networks of family day care homes. Families are able to choose the type of care they prefer for their children.
- The Department of Defense (DoD) certifies all military child care centers each year and conducts four surprise visits to each center every year. The military system enforces strict adult–child ratios—1:4 for infants and up to 1:10 for children ages three to five.
- More than 95% of military child development centers are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, compared to only 8% of child care centers in the United States as a whole.
- The centers offer competitive salaries for child care workers, including benefits. These higher wages do not translate into higher costs for military families, however, because the military subsidizes programs to keep the average cost to parents at about $70 per week per child. The fees are the same on each base for children of all ages. Fees are set on a sliding scale based on family income.
- Each military child care center has playgrounds for different age groups and space for disabled children. Safety and quality are carefully monitored.
- The military surrounds its child care programs with supports for parents. The DoD offers a 24-hour, toll-free hotline that child care employees and parents can call with concerns about the health, safety, and well-being of their children. The DoD also offers parenting and infant care classes, support groups, home visits, and crisis intervention.

Experts on Child Care and Early Childhood Development

Jay Belsky, professor at the University of London, is a lead investigator on the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study of Early Child Care, a study of more than 1,300 children in child care in 10 cities nationwide. Belsky is known for his research documenting possible negative outcomes for very young children who spend long periods of time in child care each week. 44 (0) 171 631-6589

Helen Blank, director of child care at the Children's Defense Fund, is a leading advocate for increased federal investment in child care and early childhood development programs. (202) 628-8787

Karen Bodenhorn is president and chief executive officer at the California Center for Health Improvement, the technical assistance center that is helping California counties implement Proposition 10, the state's comprehensive early childhood development initiative. (916) 646-2149

Nancy Duff Campbell is a founder and copresident of the National Women's Law Center. An expert on women's law and public policy issues, Campbell has worked principally on issues affecting low-income women and their families. (202) 588-5180

Ann Collins is director for program and policy analysis at the National Center for Children in Poverty. Collins directs NCCP's Child Care Research Partnership with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and codirects the five-year national study of low-income child care, which is conducted jointly with Abt Associates and codirected by the DHHS. (212) 304-7127

Dan Danner, senior vice president of the National Federation of Independent Business, is a critic of government mandates upon employers to provide family leave and other benefits. (202) 554-9000

Emily Fenichel is associate director at ZERO TO THREE, a national research and advocacy organization that promotes the healthy development of young children. She is an expert on Early Head Start and other federal programs to promote early childhood development. (202) 638-1144

Dana Friedman is senior adviser at Bright Horizons Family Solutions, a private firm that helps employers design and administer family-friendly programs, including child care centers. (617) 673-8000

Ellen Galinsky, president of the Families and Work Institute, is a leading advocate for creation of family-friendly workplaces that enable employees to balance work and family priorities. (212) 465-2044, ext. 202

Brad Googins is associate professor of organization studies at the Boston College Carroll School of Management and executive director of the Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship. He founded the Center for Work and Family in 1990. (617) 353-3756

Bill Gormley is professor of government and public policy at Georgetown University, where he is also codirector of the new Center for Research on Children in the United States. (202) 687-5932

Jodi Grant, director of work and family programs and public policy at the National Partnership for Women and Families, runs the partnership's Campaign for Family Leave Income, which aims to increase the number of states offering paid leave to working parents with newborns or newly adopted children. (202) 986-2600, ext. 3023

Scott Groginsky, program manager at the National Conference of State Legislatures, is knowledgeable about state investments in child care and early childhood development. (303) 830-2200

Heidi Hartman founded the Institute for Women's Policy Research in 1987 to meet the need for women-centered, policy-oriented research. (202) 785-5100

Sandra Hofferth, adjunct professor of sociology and senior research scientist in the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, researches the types of child care arrangements that parents choose for young children. (734) 763-5131

Sheila Kamerman is a professor of social work at Columbia University, where she also serves as director of the Institute for Child and Family Policy. (212) 854-5449

Jane Knitzer, deputy director of the National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University, is an expert on federal and state programs for young children, particularly those in low-income families. (212) 304-7124

Ron Lally is director of WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies. Lally is a national expert on early childhood development. (415) 289-2300

Michael H. Levine, executive director of the I Am Your Child Foundation and formerly of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, was an architect of the Starting Points Initiative to provide comprehensive services to families with young children in 10 states. (212) 636-5019

Joan Lombardi, principal of The Children's Project and former head of the U.S. Child Care Bureau at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under President Bill Clinton, writes extensively on federal and state programs for young children. (703) 660-6711

John Love works at Mathematica Policy Research in Princeton, New Jersey, focusing on child care quality and Early Head Start. (609) 275-2245

M.-A. Lucas, founding director of the U.S. Army Child and Youth Services, U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center, is an expert on the military child care system, which many cite as a model for its affordability and high-quality services. (703) 681-5385

Matthew Melmed is executive director of ZERO TO THREE, a national research and advocacy organization that promotes the healthy development of young children. (202) 638-1144

Darcy Olsen, director of child and education policy at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C., advocates for less government involvement in child care and early childhood development. (202) 842-0200

Deborah Phillips, director of the Center for Research on Children in the United States at Georgetown University, studies various types of child care and their effects on young children. (202) 687-4042

Robert Rector, senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, is a proponent of limiting federal spending on child care and changing the federal tax code and other programs to enable mothers to stay home and raise young children. (202) 546-4400

John Shonkoff is dean of the Florence Heller Graduate School and professor of human development and social policy at Brandeis University. He currently serves as chair of the Board of Children, Youth, and Families at the Institute of Medicine/National Research Council and was a member of the Panel on Child Care Policy. (781) 736-3883

Kate Sylvester is director of the Social Policy Action Network in Washington, D.C. Sylvester advises federal, state, and local officials on a variety of domestic social issues. (202) 434-4767

Ross Thompson, professor of psychology at the University of Nebraska, is an expert on the developmental stages of young children and on how parents and caregivers can promote healthy child development. (402) 472-3187

Jane Waldfogel, associate professor of social work and public affairs at the Columbia University School of Social Work, studies how governments in other countries support families with young children through subsidized child care, paid parental leave, and other policies. (212) 854-7863

Mark Wilson, research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, is a proponent of expanded flextime and compensatory-time policies for private-sector employers. He proposes revising the Fair Labor Standards Act to give both employers and employees more freedom to negotiate flexible work arrangements. (202) 546-4400

Faith Wohl is president of the Child Care Action Campaign, which advocates quality, affordable child care for all families. (202) 239-0138

Helpful Organizations and Web Sites

General Resources

Connect for Kids provides information to adults about the status of children in communities, states, and the nation.

www.connectforkids.org/index.htm

The Finance Project develops and disseminates information about improved policies, programs, and financing strategies that benefit children and families.

www.financeproject.org

The Future of Children is a research journal published by The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. It disseminates timely information on major issues related to the well-being of children. Many journal issues—including the most recent one, Caring for Infants and Toddlers—focus on topics that affect young children.

www.futureofchildren.org

The National Child Care Information Center is a project of the U.S. Child Care Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is a national resource that links information and people to complement, enhance, and promote the child care delivery system.

www.nccic.org

The National Conference of State Legislatures promotes information sharing among state legislators nationwide. The organization's human services program tracks state efforts on a broad range of family policy issues, including child care.

www.ncsl.org

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families administers federal child care and Head Start programs.

www.acf.dhhs.gov

The U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau, established by Congress in 1920, is the only federal agency mandated to represent the needs of wage-earning women in the public policy process.

www.dol.gov/dol/wb

The Welfare Information Network of the Finance Project is a clearinghouse for information, policy analysis, and technical assistance on welfare reform. WIN includes sites on both child care and early childhood development.

www.welfareinfo.org/index.html

Research

Child Trends is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization that studies children, youth, and families through research, data collection, and data analysis.

www.childtrends.org

The Institute for Women's Policy Research is a public policy research organization dedicated to informing and stimulating the debate on public policy issues of critical importance to women and their families.

www.iwpr.org

The Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics offers easy access to federal and state statistics and reports on children and their families on topics including population and family characteristics; economic security; health, behavior, and social environment; and education.

www.childstats.gov

Kids Count is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. By providing policymakers and citizens with bench-

marks of child well-being, Kids Count seeks to enrich local, state, and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children.

www.aecf.org/kidscount

The National Academy of Sciences, Board on Children, Youth, and Families addresses a variety of policy-relevant issues related to the health and development of children, youth, and families. It does so by convening experts to weigh in on matters from the perspective of the behavioral, social, and health sciences.

www4.nationalacademies.org/cbsse/bocyfweb.nsf

The National Center on Children and Poverty identifies and promotes strategies that prevent poverty among young children in the United States and that improve the life chances of the millions of children under age six who are growing up poor.

cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/index.html

The Urban Institute is a nonpartisan economic and social policy research organization. The Urban Institute focuses on children's policy as it intersects with welfare reform and other issues affecting low-income families.

www.urban.org

Advocacy and Public Policy Groups

The Cato Institute is a nonpartisan public policy research foundation that seeks to broaden the parameters of public policy debate to allow consideration of more options that are consistent with traditional U.S. principles of limited government, individual liberty, and peace. The Cato Institute has an education and child care policy division.

www.cato.org

The Child Care Action Campaign advocates for quality, affordable child care for all families.

www.childcareaction.org

The Children's Defense Fund educates the nation about the needs of children and advocates to "leave no child behind." Much of the CDF's work is centered on improving the supply, quality, and affordability of child care.

www.childrensdefensefund.org

The Families and Work Institute is committed to finding research-based strategies to foster mutually supportive connections among workplaces, families, and communities.

www.familiesandwork.org

The Family Research Council reaffirms and promotes nationally—and particularly in Washington, D.C.—the traditional family and the Judeo-Christian principles upon which it is built.

www.frc.org

The Heritage Foundation formulates and promotes conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense. The organization's family issues area focuses on questions related to child care and the workplace.

www.heritage.org

I Am Your Child is a national public awareness and engagement campaign to make early childhood development a top priority for our nation.

www.iamyourchild.org

The National Association for the Education of Young Children is the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of programs for children from birth through third grade. NAEYC works to improve professional practice and working conditions in early childhood education and to build public support for high-quality early childhood programs.

www.naeyc.org

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies provides vision, leadership, and support to community child care resource and referral agencies. NACCRRA also promotes national policies and partnerships committed to the development and learning of all children.

www.naccrra.net/index.htm

The National Head Start Association provides a national forum for the continued enhancement of Head Start services for poor children ages newborn through five and for their families.

www.nhsa.org/index.htm

The National Partnership for Women and Families promotes fairness in the workplace, quality health care, and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family. The organization led the campaign for federal family and medical leave.

www.nationalpartnership.org

National Women's Law Center has worked since its inception in 1972 to protect and advance the progress of women and girls at work, in school, and in virtually every aspect of their lives.

www.nwlc.org

ZERO TO THREE aims to strengthen and support families, practitioners, and communities to promote the healthy development of babies and toddlers.

www.zerotothree.org

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